

Strategic Plan 2006 – 2010



June 2006

STRATEGIC PLAN

2006 – 2010

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June 2006

1. Introduction to the Strategic Plan

On becoming an independent charity in 2001, DASL drew up a Service Profile and Strategic Plan for the period 2001 – 2004. This shaped the initial development of our organisation, building on DASL's previous work as a project of Lambeth Accord, putting in place a new mission statement and a range of essential policies and procedures, re-defining aims and setting objectives and targets.

In 2003, a new three year Service Strategy and Development was adopted and this set a framework within which DASL has developed into a larger and more mature organisation. Over the past three years we have been successful in achieving a number of our key objectives - securing funding to extend our existing services and to set up a new user involvement project, developing our management capacity and organisational infrastructure and making an important contribution to improving the way in which health and social care services in Lambeth are planned. There is a detailed review of the progress we have made in meeting the objectives of our 2003 – 2006 Plan at Appendix 1.

We have now produced this new Strategic Plan to map out what we hope to achieve over the next four years. In preparing the Plan, the Management Committee consulted DASL's members through a postal questionnaire and focus group sessions at our AGM in December 2005 and the staff group has also been fully involved throughout in the process of developing and writing the Plan. These discussions gave us valuable ideas about how our organisation might develop and the types of services people would like to see us providing, which we have reflected in the Plan.

There are many areas of uncertainty ahead, particularly about the way in which the statutory sector intends to commission the services it requires will impact on the local voluntary sector and about levels of future funding. For this reason, we are not able to be very specific about how our services will look by the time we reach the third and fourth years of the Plan. The Management Committee will update the Plan each year to bring it up to date and to respond to strategic and financial developments to ensure that our services are still relevant and to manage the risks to the health and stability of our organisation.

2. About Disability Advice Service Lambeth

2.1 Background

Disability Advice Service Lambeth (DASL) is a charity and a company limited by guarantee which provides a range of information and advice, direct payments support and user involvement services to disabled people in Lambeth. In 2001, we became an independent charity, having operated since 1984 as a project of a larger charity, Lambeth Accord, under the name 'In the Know'. We are a membership organisation with a Management Committee, currently of ten people, elected annually by members. We operate from fully accessible office

premises just outside Brixton in the centre of this multicultural south London borough.

DASL's mission is "to advise and support people with disabilities in Lambeth to overcome discrimination and assert their human rights". Our aim in doing this is to enable people to obtain the services to which they are entitled, make choices about how and where they live and play an active role in their communities. Our Mission Statement, Core Values and Objectives can be read at Appendix 3.

Over the years, DASL has established itself as an effective and important resource for disabled people and it is unique in Lambeth in providing advice and information to people with all types of disabilities including physical and sensory disabilities, long-term health conditions, learning difficulties and mental health issues, rather than to a single client group.

2.2 Our current services

At June 2006, DASL employs ten staff of whom three are part-time. The senior officer of DASL is the Director. The two main services are each led by a Service Manager. More information about the structure and personnel of our organisation can be found at Appendices 4 and 5.

2.2.1 The Advice and Information Service

The Advice and Information Service is targeted mainly at disabled people living in Lambeth but it is also used by carers, in relation to disability issues, and a range of professionals. We undertake casework for disabled people in the areas of welfare benefits, housing and community care. In May 2003, we were awarded the Community Legal Service Quality Mark at General Help with Casework level for the Welfare Benefits and Disability categories of law, which we have maintained. We also provide information and general advice in the above categories, and in debt, discrimination law, transport services, employment and education, health and consumer rights.

DASL's primary target group for advice work is disabled people aged 18 - 65 years. Where appropriate alternative services are available for disabled people in other age groups, referrals may be made to these providers but, subject to capacity, we take on such cases on where we consider that, with our disability focus, we can offer the most effective service at that time.

The Advice and Information Service is provided by a team which consists of :

- The **Advice Service Manager**. This 32 hour per week post is funded until October 2007 by Bridge House Trust and manages and develops the service, as well as undertaking more complex casework.
- The **Benefits Advice Worker**. This 35 hour post is fully funded in 2006/07 by Lambeth Endowed Charities, Lloyds TSB Foundation, and Lambeth Council's Community Fund, with contributions from City Parochial Foundation, Bridge House Trust. Part-funding from Lambeth Endowed Charities is in place for 2007/08. The worker is responsible for benefits advice casework as well as providing information and general advice on other issues.

- The **Information Worker**. This 21 hour post (28 hours in 2006/07) is funded by Lambeth Adults' & Community Services until June 2007 and acts as first point of contact for the public, dealing with most of the information enquiries received, producing the 'Mole' newsletter, managing our information resources and applying for a range of grants for clients.

Core funding for the service comes from DASL's contract (2004-07) with Lambeth Adults' & Community Services.

The service is delivered through :

- A telephone / minicom enquiry line operating Mondays to Fridays 10am - 1pm (enquiries are also dealt with at other times if staff are available);
- Advice casework for disabled people on welfare benefits, housing, community care and debt. This service is available through appointments at DASL's offices or home visits. Advice sessions in community locations are being planned;
- General advice and information on these areas and a range of other issues such as disability discrimination, education and training, employment, transport and mobility services, access, health conditions, health services, leisure;
- The Information Centre, an in-depth collection of materials (books, leaflets, journals etc) on disability and related issues both at national and local level, supplemented by Internet information searches as necessary;
- The 'Mole' newsletter, published six times a year, and distributed to members of DASL, other voluntary and statutory organisations and Lambeth councillors;
- Factsheets and other information items produced by DASL.

Details of the services provided in 2005/06 are at Appendix 2.

2.2.2 The Direct Payments Support Service

This is the support service for people in Lambeth who wish to receive their community care services in the form of direct payments. The Service's role is to ensure that people have access to independent information and advice when they make their choices about their community care services, and that they are able to manage their direct payments successfully by providing training and support. The service is provided by a team consisting of the **Direct Payments Service Manager** and four **Direct Payments Workers** (three full-time equivalent posts) and is funded by Lambeth Adults' and Community Services through a three year contract (2004-07), the annual Carers' Special Grant and additional resources. From February 2004 – March 2005, the *New Paths to Direct Payments in Lambeth* project, managed by DASL on behalf of the Lambeth Direct Payments Network, carried out development work with a range of client groups, funded by the Department of Health's Direct Payments Development Fund and Lambeth Primary Care Trust.

Staff are available to clients for information enquiries by telephone and for appointments at the office or by home visit throughout the week.

The service offers :

- Initial advice and information to those who wish to find out more about the Lambeth scheme;
- Advocacy for people who wish to use the scheme in their dealings with Adults' & Community Services, for example where community care / direct payments assessments are delayed or there are issues about ability to manage direct payments;
- Advice and assistance with recruitment and management of personal assistants;
- Training and support in managing direct payments and being an employer, for example help with completing the monitoring returns required by Lambeth, advice on tax and national insurance, staff timetables, contracts and health and safety at work;
- Facilitation of information and training meetings for users;
- Promotion of direct payments and provision of information and awareness training to social workers and other professionals;
- Research into direct payments issues and development of new ways of making direct payments relevant and accessible to under-represented target groups.
- Partnership work with Lambeth Council and other stakeholders to develop the Lambeth scheme.

Details of the services provided in 2005/06 are at Appendix 2.

2.2.3 User involvement

The Disabilities Partnership & Involvement Project has been funded from 2004 – 2006 through the Health Action Zone programme, managed by Lambeth Primary Care Trust. With the end of the HAZ programme in March 2006, the PCT has not yet decided [at June 2006] whether it will be in a position to provide further funding for the project from its mainstream budgets.

The key resource of the project is the **Disabilities Partnership and Involvement Worker**. The postholder works with people with physical and sensory disabilities and long-term health conditions, and with their community and voluntary organisations, to support them to become fully involved in partnership initiatives, including the Lambeth Disabilities Partnership, and to have their say about services.

Services provided as part of the project have included :

- Organisation of a major stakeholder consultation event on '*Ability, choice and independence*', Lambeth's Joint Strategy for services for people with

physical and sensory disabilities 2005 – 2009, and co-authorship of the Strategy document in a fully accessible format;

- Support to service users on the Disabilities Partnership Board and involvement in the Board's Strategy Sub-Group;
- Organisation of information events on transport and community equipment services and workshop groups for members at DASL's AGMs in 2004 and 2005;
- Publication of a quarterly newsletter, *Involve*;
- Facilitation of a regular discussion group for users of Lambeth Resource Centre and moderation of an email discussion group.

2.2.4 Partnership working and promotion of disabled people's issues

DASL has become increasingly involved in partnership work and campaigning on issues which affect disabled people. As an established voluntary organisation, it has also taken on important roles representing and supporting the voluntary and community sector. Our officers are currently active on a number of bodies where our experience and knowledge of disability and local voluntary sector issues is making a significant contribution. These include :

- Co-Chairing the Lambeth Disabilities Partnership Board and serving on its Strategy Sub-Group;
- Coordinating the multi-stakeholder Lambeth Direct Payments Network since its inception in 2000, working with Council officers on the Adults' and Community Services Direct Payments Project Board and serving on the project groups for Lambeth's Adult Learning Disability Public Service Agreement (2003-06) and the current 'In Control' project;
- Co-Chairing the Lambeth Voluntary and Community Sector Health and Social Care Forum and representing its member organisations on the Lambeth Health and Social Care Partnership and its Executive;
- Chairing the Advisory Board of the Lambeth Home Improvement Agency;
- Membership of other bodies such as the Integration of Community Equipment Services (ICES) Reference Group, the Lambeth Advocacy Strategy Group, the Carers Strategy Working Group and the Lambeth Community Legal Services Partnership Steering Group.

3. The context for our Strategic Plan

3.1 The national agenda

The national context within which we expect to operate over the next four years is provided by a range of legislation and policy initiatives, including :

- 3.1.1 The White Paper, '**Our health, our care, our say**' (January 2006), the Government's long-term vision for community-based health and social care services, the key themes of which are :

- Better prevention services with earlier intervention
- Give people more choice and a louder voice
- Tackling inequalities and improving access to community services
- More support for people with long-term needs

Within this, priorities include :

- Setting challenging targets to increase take-up of direct payments
 - Development of 'Individual Budgets', possibly bringing together a number of funding streams including social care, community equipment, Access to Work, Independent Living Funds, Disabled Facilities Grants and the Supporting People programme.
- 3.1.2 The linked Prime Minister's Strategy Unit's report '**Improving the life chances of disabled people**' (January 2005), which identifies access to information, advice, advocacy and support with self-assessment and direct payments as key elements in making real independent living achievable and recommends capacity building user-led disability organisations to act as 'centres for independent living' to provide these services.
- 3.1.3 **The National Service Framework for Long-term Conditions** (March 2005) which aims to transform the way health and social care services support people to live with long-term neurological conditions. Key themes are independent living, care planned around the needs and choices of the individual, easier, timely access to services and joint working across all agencies and disciplines involved.
- 3.1.4 Government requirements for genuine **user involvement** in planning health and social care services reflected in the White Paper and in specific reports and strategies such as '*Creating a patient-led NHS: delivering the NHS Improvement Plan* and the Patient and Public Involvement strategy.
- 3.1.5 Major **reform of incapacity for work benefits** by 2008 which will create a need for advice for existing and new claimants on their entitlements and further investment in local back-to-work schemes.
- 3.1.6 The Legal Services Commission's Strategy for the Community Legal Service 2006-2011, **Making legal rights a reality** (March 2006), which will place greater emphasis on national telephone and web-based services to provide basic advice and encourage 'suitable' local authorities to concentrate face-to-face social welfare advice services in jointly-funded Community Legal Advice Centres which would be a single legal entity run by one large supplier with services provided by a consortium under one contract.
- 3.1.7 The **Disability Discrimination Act** 1995, as amended by the Disability Discrimination Act 2005, placing a duty on all public sector authorities to promote disability equality through the development of Disability Equality Schemes, with the full involvement of disabled people, by December 2006.

- 3.1.8 The **Treasury Cross-Cutting Review on the role of the voluntary and community sector (VCS)** (2002) which seeks to involve the VCS in the planning as well as the delivery of services and to build the capacity of the sector, acknowledging the principles of full-cost recovery as a basis for the pricing of contracts.
- 3.1.9 **“Improving Services, Improving Lives”**, the Social Exclusion Unit’s work programme, which includes a project to make mainstream public services more effective for disabled people and those with long-term health conditions, with areas of focus including improving information and communication with users, building clients’ personal capacity and working more effectively with the voluntary sector.

3.2 The Lambeth agenda

3.2.1 Lambeth’s population

- Lambeth has the largest population of any inner London borough (268,500 in 2003) with high levels of social and economic disadvantage and with a large percentage of people on means-tested benefits, unemployed and living in poor housing conditions. The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2004 showed that 24 (14%) of Lambeth's 177 'Super output Areas' (SOAs) are ranked in the 10% most deprived in England and that 139 (79%) are ranked within the 30% most deprived. People from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities make up 38% of the population, with a total of 132 languages spoken.
- There is above-average incidence of mental illness, HIV / AIDS and of the health problems associated with particular minority ethnic communities. The 2001 census recorded over 38,000 people with some form of disability or 'long-term limiting illness'. Using Government calculations, over 14,000 people aged 18 – 64 would be expected to have some form of disability. About 24% of the disabled population is unemployed. The Director of Public Health estimates that at least 37,000 people suffer from depression and anxiety at any one time and that 3,000 people will experience a severe mental illness such as schizophrenia

3.2.2 The local strategic framework

- In May 2006, Labour took control of **Lambeth Council** after four years of joint Liberal Democrat / Conservative administration. Labour’s stated priorities include tackling inequality and social exclusion; specific manifesto commitments were made to develop joint service centres in order to make services for older and disabled people more accessible, and to improve the Direct Payments scheme.

The Council is operating within a climate of considerable financial risk for 2006/07 and beyond. In Adults and Community Services, following an overspend of over £4 million in 2005/06, there are particular pressures resulting from the increased numbers of clients with learning disabilities and the greater complexity of needs being met. The application of Lambeth’s FACS (Fair Access to Care Services) eligibility criteria, under which only

clients at critical or substantial risk are being provided with services, is resulting in large numbers of disabled people with lower level needs being refused services but without the necessary range of preventative services being available for them to access.

Lambeth PCT's Business and Local Delivery Plans for 2006-07 set out how it will address national and local priorities such as shifting the balance of healthcare services to primary settings closer to patients' homes, tackling health inequalities and commissioning new services for people with long-term conditions. It will be trying to achieve these objectives within a difficult financial environment requiring expenditure savings of £20 million in 2006-07 and further savings in 2007-08.

Lambeth Council and Lambeth PCT are working increasingly closely together in the health and social care area and the current joint commissioning and performance management arrangements are likely to be extended into greater integration in service delivery. There may be more radical reconfiguration of health, social care and housing services following the Council election. These changes would have a major impact on the voluntary sector, for example in the priority which would be given to commissioning only services which help to deliver joint targets and improving performance against mandatory indicators.

- **Lambeth Community Strategy 2004 – 2015** sets the long-term vision for the borough in terms of social, economic and environmental sustainability and the well-being of residents. Key themes include supporting healthier communities, making safer communities, better homes and sustainable communities and encouraging employment, enterprise, skills and culture. Within the healthier communities theme, key strategic objectives include enabling vulnerable residents to live independently for as long as possible and improving access and choice in primary and social care. The priorities have been reflected in the allocation of special sources of funding such as the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund.
- Lambeth is currently developing its **Local Area Agreement (LAA)** for 2007 – 2010. Once outcomes, targets and indicators have been agreed with the Government, this will channel a number of Government funding streams through Lambeth Council to deliver these priorities. Two of the four 'blocks' will be 'Healthier Communities and Older People' [in Lambeth, this will be broadened to include vulnerable adults in general] and 'Safer and Stronger Communities'. A major outcome for the first of these blocks will be the reduction of premature mortality by developing more preventative services and it is likely that another will include work to promote users' independence through provision of support to live at home and to increase choice through use of direct payments and individualised budgets.
- **'Ability, choice and independence', Lambeth's Joint Strategy for services for people with physical and sensory disabilities 2005 – 2009**, aims to change the focus of services by :
 - involving users in planning services
 - developing more advice, information and advocacy services

- improving assessment and care management
- improving choice and providing more locally based services including those for people with complex disabilities
- increasing the supply of suitable housing
- improving education, employment and leisure opportunities and transport

There are similar strategies in place for older people, adults with learning disabilities and people with mental health problems which will also have an impact on DASL's work.

- The **Lambeth Supporting People Strategy 2005-2010** aims to improve the health and quality of life for vulnerable residents of Lambeth by targeting housing-related support services. The development of additional services for disabled people has been made a priority, including use of assistive technology and new models of floating support, to enable people to continue to live independently.
- **Advice services** in Lambeth continue to be hard-pressed. Lambeth part-funds five generalist advice centres and one law centre and, with the PCT, a peripatetic money advice service is provided to registered patients at GP surgeries. There are also a small number of independent services such as DASL providing information or advice to specific client groups.
- There are no **advocacy services** available for people with physical and sensory disabilities or older people : this issue is now being addressed through a working group of the Lambeth Health and Social Care Partnership, co-convened by DASL, which was tasked in March 2006 with developing a Lambeth strategic plan for advocacy.
- On **Direct Payments**, Lambeth has made significant progress with 182 users on the scheme at May 2006. Performance is good against comparator local authorities in relation to take-up by people with physical / sensory disabilities and those with learning disabilities (Lambeth is also a Department for Health pilot authority for the 'In Control' initiative). Following an independent review (January 2006), the Council is costing the consultant's recommendations and has accepted that more needs to be done to increase take-up by older people, carers and mental health service users, to integrate the scheme into Social Services strategic thinking, to improve care management teams' training and procedures and enhance the support services which are available to users. A Direct Payments Action Plan is under development, to which DASL is contributing, and there is an intention to 're-launch' Direct Payments in Lambeth in the autumn of 2006.

4. Our Development Strategy

4.1 The overall vision and framework

DASL has established itself as a respected and quality-assured provider of advice, information and direct payments support services over the past five years. We have developed sound and stable organisational management and financial structures. We have successfully delivered services through our Adults' and Community Services' contracts for two years, developed increasingly effective user involvement work and raised our profile as a constructive and influential contributor to joint working with the statutory and voluntary sectors. We believe that we are in a position to make a greater contribution to improving the quality of disabled people's lives over the next four years.

The broad objectives for the development of our organisation over this period will be to :

- 4.1.1 respond to the national and local agendas for disability services, in particular in relation to developments in enabling independent living and greater user choice and control over services;
- 4.1.2 continue to improve the responsiveness, quality and cost-effectiveness of our services and develop, in collaboration with funders and other partners, improved ways of evaluating the outcomes of our work;
- 4.1.3 develop an holistic range of accessible, person-centred information, advice, advocacy and direct payments / independent living support services for disabled people in Lambeth, provided both through DASL and, where there is potential, through joint working with voluntary sector partners;
- 4.1.4 secure realistic levels of funding for services and organisational infrastructure;
- 4.1.5 deliver our services flexibly and effectively at the point of need which will include developing our outreach work in community settings and maximising the benefits of our website and other technologies;
- 4.1.6 achieve a balance between the provision of services to disabled people with the highest levels of need, who are likely to be eligible for Council social care services, and of preventative services for people who are not;
- 4.1.7 explore new areas, such as advocacy and leisure / sports access linked to the healthy living agenda, in which we believe our experience would enable us to either offer services ourselves or work in partnership with other organisations, including disability organisations in other London boroughs, to improve the services available for disabled people;
- 4.1.8 increase our work with schools, community groups and other organisations to ensure that young disabled people receive proper information, advice and independent living support during the key period of transition to further education, work and adult services and are able to access social and recreational opportunities to enable them to play a full part in their communities;

- 4.1.9 promote and deliver our service more effectively to disabled people of all ages and backgrounds, including those from some minority ethnic communities on which our impact has been limited to date;
- 4.1.10 continue to play an influential role within the local voluntary and community sector by supporting and representing the sector as appropriate and engaging actively with statutory partners on its behalf;
- 4.1.11 further develop the services we offer which support smaller community organisations in relation to disability issues.

4.2 Advice, advocacy and information

Demand for information, advice and advocacy will continue to grow in the coming years, both from people not eligible for Social Services provision being signposted to agencies such as DASL for assistance and because the Government, in the context of the White Paper, will now be requiring the statutory services to find ways to develop and fund a range of preventative services.

Our objectives over the next period are to :

- 4.2.1 re-tender successfully for the Adults' and Community Services Advice and Information for Disabled People contract to enable us to secure the basic funding for the period 2007/10 on which additional advice, advocacy and information services can be founded;
- 4.2.2 maintain a viable advice service by securing funding for the full cost of the post of Benefits Advice Worker in 2007-08 and new funding from April 2008 when current trust funding expires;
- 4.2.3 secure renewal funding for the post of Advice Service Manager from November 2007;
- 4.2.4 seek additional funding for welfare benefits and debt (money advice) casework with a particular focus on clients with mental health problems and on disabled people from under-served minority ethnic communities;
- 4.2.5 explore opportunities to develop the range and depth of our advice work in areas such as housing, employment and disability discrimination;
- 4.2.6 develop an advocacy service for people with physical and sensory disabilities, focussed on community care and independent living issues;
- 4.2.7 further develop DASL's Information Service to become a more comprehensive resource on disability issues, available to disabled people, carers and voluntary and statutory sector professionals through a variety of methods including extended distribution of the newsletter and introduction of a website in 2006. We will also seek funding to make the Information Worker post full-time which would enable us to provide more support to smaller, non-specialist voluntary and community organisations which work with disabled people, for example through circulation of current awareness information, provision of advice to advisers and training.

- 4.2.8 work with partners on the Lambeth Community Legal Service Partnership and the Lambeth Advice Forum to influence strategic decisions about the funding, development and reconfiguration of local advice services in the context of *Making legal rights a reality*, to ensure that advice services for disabled people are given a high priority and that DASL maintains its position as the leading source of expertise in the borough on disability advice issues.

4.3 Direct Payments and independent living support

Increasing the use of direct payments and developing new forms of self-directed care such as individualised budgets are key themes of the White Paper and are important strategic priorities for Lambeth Council.

Our objectives over the coming period are to :

- 4.3.1 re-tender successfully for the Adults' and Community Services contract to provide a direct payments support service for the period 2007/10;
- 4.3.2 sustain the post of Direct Payments Service Manager as a key resource for the effective management of the service;
- 4.3.3 further develop our work to increase the use of direct payments by carers which is currently funded through the Carers Special Grant;
- 4.3.4 develop specialist project work with other client groups, including mental health service users, to increase their take-up of direct payments;
- 4.3.5 work with partners, for example through involvement in the 'In Control' pilot, to develop and provide sustainable models of direct payments / independent living support and service brokerage to enable the successful introduction of individualised budgets in Lambeth;
- 4.3.6 contribute to the implementation and delivery of Adults' and Community Services' new Direct Payments Action Plan through continued active involvement in the Direct Payments Project Board;
- 4.3.7 coordinate and further develop the Lambeth Direct Payments Network as the main focus for partnership work on the promotion and development of direct payments and other forms of self-directed care;
- 4.3.8 further develop DASL's user groups and facilitate and support peer support systems.

4.4 Working for disabled people's rights and user involvement

In line with our Mission Statement, the overall objective of all DASL's services is to advise and support disabled people to obtain their rights and to represent their interests. Our Advice and Information and our Direct Payments Support Services do this by providing essential services to individuals. However, we will also seek to achieve this objective at a local strategic and policy level in a variety of ways including :

- 4.4.1 securing continued funding for a user involvement project to focus DASL's work with people with physical and sensory disabilities and long-term conditions;
- 4.4.2 continuing to act as a key voluntary sector representative on the Lambeth Disabilities Partnership Board, supporting the involvement of service users and other voluntary and community groups in the Board's work, especially the delivery of its Joint Strategy;
- 4.4.3 developing our user involvement work across a range of other initiatives including the PCT's Patient and Public Involvement Strategy and the Council's development of its Disability Equality Scheme;
- 4.4.4 carrying out and disseminating research and social policy work on the issues from the national, London and local disability agenda and linking this to partnership work and campaigning with the active involvement of DASL members and service users and other disabled people in Lambeth;
- 4.4.5 developing DASL's role in relation to disability discrimination and equality issues, working with disabled people and their organisations. As a resource, DASL seeks to become an independent focus for public awareness and educational work, information, training and advice for service providers including businesses and employers, provision of general advice to clients and referral for more specialist legal help and practical work on access issues;
- 4.4.6 maintaining DASL's commitment to partnership work with, and on behalf of, the voluntary and community sector, in its engagement with the statutory services, for example in relation to the development of Lambeth's Local Area Agreement.

4.5 Organisational development

Although DASL has sound systems in place for governance, financial control and operational management, any significant growth will require a number of organisational developments.

Our broad objectives over the next four years are to :

- 4.5.1 diversify our funding base and secure realistic core funding, on full-cost recovery principles, which will ensure that we have the management, financial and administrative capacity to support the delivery of services and projects;
- 4.5.2 explore opportunities for DASL to take on a capacity building / lead commissioning role in relation to the development and delivery of services to people with physical and sensory disabilities and long-term conditions by the voluntary and community sector;
- 4.5.3 explore the possibilities of generating funding for small projects and activities through sponsorship from local business;
- 4.5.4 maximise the benefits of our IT network and fund a sustainable planned IT replacement programme. This will include extending application of the

AIMS database across the organisation to provide a fully integrated case management and monitoring system and further development of the DASL website;

- 4.5.5 seek funding to enable us to develop a volunteering programme and to train and manage our volunteers, in particular for dealing with information enquiries and providing independent living support and basic money advice;
- 4.5.6 develop a clearer and more effective communications and promotional strategy leading to production of improved corporate publicity and information materials;
- 4.5.7 encourage a larger and more active membership by developing improved communication through the website, newsletter, and email and organisation of more meetings, events and activities to seek views on our own services and on wider issues;
- 4.5.8 continue to improve internal management and quality systems, maintain robust organisation-wide performance monitoring arrangements, improve user involvement in, and feedback on, our services and update and develop policies and procedures to ensure the sound governance of the organisation and management of its services.

5. Our Main Development Targets 2006 - 2010

ADVICE, ADVOCACY AND INFORMATION		
Service [Strategy reference]	Target	Year/s for action
Core Advice & Information Service [4.2.1]	Continue to deliver funded service to a high standard, secure extension of current ACS contract for 07/08 and win three year contract from 08/09	06/07 & 07/08
Benefits Advice Worker [4.2.2]	Close remaining funding gap for 07/08	06/07
	Continue to deliver funded service to a high standard and secure new funding for April 08 onwards	07/08
Advice Service Manager [4.2.3]	Continue to deliver funded service to a high standard and secure new funding from November 2007 onwards	06/07 & 07/08
Money Advice Worker [4.2.4]	Secure funding for an additional adviser to provide benefits and debt advice	06/07
Development of specialisms [4.2.5]	Explore need for housing and employment advice and for a disability discrimination information / advice service, and identify potential sources of funding	07/08 onwards
Advocacy service [4.2.6]	Develop proposals for a new service for people with physical and sensory disabilities	06/07
	Secure funding to commence a service	07/08
	Continue to work through the Lambeth Advocacy Strategy Group to develop an Advocacy Plan for the borough to maximise independent advocacy resources	Ongoing
Service delivery and accessibility [4.2.4]	Develop outreach advice work with mental health service users, disabled people from Portuguese and other BME communities	06/07 & 07/08
	Seek funding for the costs of professional interpreters to support advice casework	06/07
	Explore ways of funding a full-time Information Worker post	07/08

Information Services [4.2.7]	Obtain additional funding and / or sponsorship to develop the 'Mole' newsletter and increase its circulation	06/07
	Introduce a range of regularly updated information factsheets on disability and related topics	06/07
	Develop the DASL website as a resource by which disabled people in Lambeth can access key local and national information	06/07 onwards
Young disabled people [4.1.8]	Improve links with schools, Connexions, voluntary and youth groups to find out about the information and advice needs of young people	06/07
	Review and improve existing information resources for this client group and promote DASL services more actively	07/08
Development of Lambeth advice services [4.2.8]	Continue to serve on the Lambeth CLSP Steering Group and support the development of a Lambeth Advice Forum	06/07 onwards
DIRECT PAYMENTS AND INDEPENDENT LIVING SUPPORT		
Service [Strategy reference]	Target	Year /s for action
Direct Payments Support Service [4.3.1]	Continue to deliver funded service to a high standard and secure extension of current ACS contract for 07/08 and win three year contract for re-configured independent living support services from 08/09	06/07 & 07/08
Direct Payments Service Manager [4.3.2]	Continue to deliver funded service to a high standard and secure renewed funding from April 2007	06/07
Client group development work [4.3.3 / 4.3.4]	Continue to deliver funded services to a high standard and secure renewed funding for development work and individual support to carers from April 2007	06/07
	With Direct Payments Network members, arrange a local information / training event to raise the profile of direct payments for mental health service users	06/07
	Work with the integrated mental health services and the voluntary sector to develop innovative ways in which service users can access direct payments	06/07 & 07/08
	Continue to provide in-depth support to adults with learning disabilities through group sessions and one-to-one casework	Ongoing

In Control [4.3.5]	Continue to contribute as a member of the core planning group to the development and implementation of Lambeth's 'In Control' project	06/07 & 07/08
	Work with other local voluntary organisations to develop models for brokerage and undertake pilots	06/07
	Pursue opportunities to provide brokerage services as the 'In Control' model is further developed and rolled out across care management groups	07/08
Partnership work with Lambeth Council [4.3.6]	Work with Council officers on the development and implementation of its new Direct Payments Action Plan	06/07 & ongoing
Lambeth Direct Payments Network [4.3.7]	Continue to convene the Network and support voluntary organisations and service users to be involved in its work	Ongoing
	Work with Lambeth Council on its 're-launch' of Direct Payments from September 2006	06/07
	Ensure that the Network is fully involved in developments on Direct Payments, individualised budgets and other forms of self-directed care.	Ongoing
User groups and peer support [4.3.8]	Organise and facilitate general and client group-based user groups as appropriate to provide information, training and social opportunities for direct payments users	Ongoing
	Work with users to develop proposals for peer support systems to allow the sharing of experience and skills involved in managing direct payments.	06/07 & 07/08
WORKING FOR DISABLED PEOPLE'S RIGHTS AND USER INVOLVEMENT		
Service [Strategy reference]	Target	Year /s for action
DASL User Involvement project [4.4.1]	Continue to deliver the funded service to a high standard and secure continued funding for DASL's Disabilities Partnership and Involvement Project	06/07
Disabilities Partnership Board [4.4.2]	Through DASL's participation in the Board and its Strategy Sub-Group, seek to develop the effectiveness and influence of the Board in the strategic development of services	Ongoing
	Strengthen user involvement in the Board and its sub-groups by providing training and support to representatives	06/07 onwards

Public & Patient Involvement [4.4.3]	Develop work with Lambeth PCT to increase the involvement of disabled people in its PPI Strategy	06/07
Disability Equality Scheme [4.4.3]	Work with Council officers to involve disabled people in the development of Lambeth's corporate and departmental Disability Equality Scheme	06/07
Research and campaigning [4.4.4]	Carry out and disseminate social policy work and research on local disability issues such as transport services	Ongoing
	Liaise with national and London disability organisations to develop campaigning activities on key issues with disabled people in Lambeth	Ongoing
	Continue to publish 'Involve' newsletter and extend its distribution to more disabled people	06/07
Disability discrimination and equality [4.4.5]	Improve DASL's information resources on disability discrimination and equality issues	06/07
	Develop proposals for providing training in disability discrimination and equality with a range of partner agencies	07/08
	Support and develop work on local disability access issues with disabled people	06/07 & 07/08
Access to sport and leisure [4.1.6]	Explore an enhanced role for DASL in supporting disabled people to have greater involvement in, and access to, sport and leisure opportunities	06/07 onwards
Partnership working [4.4.6]	Continue to play an active role in the development of improved services for disabled people, particularly through the Lambeth Health and Social Care Partnership	Ongoing
	Work through the Lambeth Health and Social Care Voluntary and Community Sector Forum to contribute to the development of a strong and diverse voluntary sector and to represent the interests of disabled people	Ongoing
ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT		
Service [Strategy reference]	Target	Year /s for action
Fundraising [4.5.1 & 4.5.2]	Put in place a fundraising plan to deliver the targets in DASL's Strategic Plan which clearly identifies the funding needed to sustain existing services, develop new ones, cover realistic core costs and build reserves to secure the future stability of the organisation.	06/07, updated annually

	Assess the potential for DASL to develop and / or contribute to the provision of additional services targeted at younger disabled people	07/08
	Seek funding for administrative support for the management team	07/08
	Seek funding from Lambeth's business community for sponsorship of events and publications	07/08
Capacity building / 'Lead commissioning' [4.5.2]	Explore opportunities arising from Lambeth Council's re-commissioning of services from the voluntary sector	06/07 & 07/08
	Explore potential for development of front-line and second tier disability services with disability organisations in other London boroughs, arising from the ALG's review of its commissioning priorities	06/07
Information & Communications Technology (ICT) [4.5.4]	Develop an ICT Strategy covering policy and operational management, data protection etc and including funding targets for IT development and replacement	06/07
Develop volunteering [4.5.5]	Develop a range of volunteer roles and recruit, train and support additional volunteers, particularly disabled people	06/07
	Seek funding for a Volunteer Coordinator	07/08
Communications strategy [4.5.6]	Introduce new DASL logo, improve and re-launch range of DASL publicity and information materials	06/07 & 07/08
	Maintain regular production of DASL newsletters	Ongoing
	Launch DASL website by Autumn 2006	06/07
DASL membership [4.5.7]	Continue to increase individual and organisational membership	Ongoing
	Review membership services in the light of membership survey 2005/06 and offer new membership opportunities and benefits	06/07
	Develop members' area on DASL website	07/08
Internal management and quality assurance [4.5.8]	Carry out a whole-organisation risk assessment	06/07
	Continue to work to CLS Quality Mark standards for casework	Ongoing
	Roll-out use of AIMS software across all DASL services	06/07
	Maintain annual review of quality procedures and develop or update key policies and procedures as required	Ongoing
	Develop improved systems for evaluation of services and user feedback	06/07 onwards

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 : Review of the Service Strategy and Development Plan 2003 - 2006

ADVICE AND INFORMATION SERVICE : PROGRESS ON MAIN TARGETS	
2003 - 04	
ORIGINAL TARGET	PROGRESS
Secure renewed funding for Welfare Benefits Adviser post	Full-time post funded by City Parochial Foundation, Lambeth Endowed Charities and Bridge House Trust until March 2006
Fundraise for new post of Advice Service Manager / Senior Advice Worker	New full-time post of Advice Service Manager funded by Bridge House Trust November 2004 – October 2007
Consider tender to provide benefits advice to Fairer Charging clients	Not pursued
Tender for main Social Services disability advice / information contract	Successfully tendered for voluntary sector contract to provide Advice and Information Service to Disabled People, July 2004 – June 2007
2004 - 2005	
Fundraise for new post of Advocacy Worker (Community Care and Independent Living)	DASL involved in partnership work to develop independent advocacy strategy for Lambeth which may lead to opportunities [see XXXX]
Develop the Information Service and newsletter and seek funding for additional hours for Information Worker post	Information Worker hours increased from 21 to 28 in 2005/06 'Mole' newsletter revamped, published every two months, circulation increased
2005 - 2006	
Fundraise for housing information / advice worker	No progress made [limited funding opportunities – applications for Money Advice Worker prioritised]
Explore need for employment / training / education and disability discrimination information / advice service and identify potential sources of funding	
Seek renewal funding for Welfare Benefits / Debt Adviser posts	Applications in progress for 2/3 year funding for Money Advice Worker from July 2006
<u>Ongoing targets</u>	
Maintain CLS Quality Mark Standard and satisfy annual audit requirements	QM retained although Legal Services Commission has not conducted further audits. Major improvements in internal quality procedures for advice work (eg independent file review; casework monitoring) put in place by Advice Service Manager

DIRECT PAYMENTS SUPPORT SERVICE : PROGRESS ON MAIN TARGETS	
2003 - 2004	
Tender for Social Services direct payments support contract	Successfully tendered for voluntary sector contract to provide Direct Payments Support Service, July 2004 – June 2007
Deliver Carers Direct Payments Project against agreed specification	Achieved
Deliver first stage of “New Paths to Direct Payments in Lambeth” with project partners	Project commenced February 2004
2004 - 2005	
Complete “New Paths to Direct Payments in Lambeth” with project partners and investigate funding to sustain client group initiatives and DASL direct payments service management function	Intensive project group work undertaken with adults with learning disabilities. Promotion and training activities delivered with older people and mental health service users and their organisations. New publicity and training materials produced. Direct Payments Service Manager post maintained with additional funding from October 2004.
2005 - 2006	
Investigate funding to sustain client group initiatives and DASL direct payments service management function	Six months additional funding secured from Social Services for direct payments work with adults with learning disabilities. Continued funding of Direct Payments Service Manager post. Development work undertaken with mental health service users and professionals.
Ongoing targets	
Secure further funding for Carers Direct Payments project work	Funding from Carers Special Grant increased in 2004/05 to enable full-time post to be created and maintained at this level in 2005/06 and 2006/07
Joint working to discuss DASL role in implementation of Social Services Action Plan and resource implications	DASL maintained close involvement in policy work with Social Services and coordination of Direct Payments Network.
Review Support Service staffing levels and seek additional resources required to maintain service	Ongoing

WORKING FOR DISABLED PEOPLE’S RIGHTS : PROGRESS ON MAIN TARGETS	
2003 - 2004	
Make funding application to Council / PCT for Disabilities Partnership and Involvement post to develop partnership working within voluntary sector and support user involvement in service planning and consultation	Two year Health Action Zone funding awarded by Lambeth PCT February 2004

2004 - 2005	
Develop partnership and involvement work with voluntary sector, users and DASL members including rolling out training and setting up user forums	User involvement worker appointed September 2004. Developed newsletter, organised consultation events on transport and community equipment, supported users on Disabilities Partnership Board. DASL Director co-chaired Lambeth Disabilities Partnership Board and Lambeth Voluntary and Community Sector Health and Social Care Forum
2005 - 2006	
Further develop partnership and involvement work with voluntary sector, users and DASL members and maintain funding for funded post	User involvement worker led consultation on Disabilities Partnership Joint Strategy and re-wrote the Strategy. Application for funding from April 2006 made to Lambeth PCT.

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT : PROGRESS ON MAIN TARGETS	
2003 – 2004 / 2004 - 2005	
Fundraise for IT developments including networking	Funding for IT network awarded by Lambeth PCT March 2005
Develop Volunteer and Staff Development / Training Policies	New policies and procedures in place April 2005
2005 - 2006	
Further IT development including establishment of website	IT network installed June 2005. Major improvements in internal and external communication, data management etc. Invitation to tender for DASL website issued March 2006
Develop use of volunteers and seek funding for training and support	Not progressed
Develop and consult on new three year development strategy	DASL members consulted December 2005 / January 2006. New strategy to be published April 2006.

Appendix 2 : Our mission, core values and objectives

Our mission statement is :

- DASL recognises that disabled people face discrimination for a variety of reasons. They are likely to experience prejudice in their personal lives and unequal access to services such as education, training, employment, housing, health and advice. They are often excluded from playing a full part in the social, economic and political life of their communities. While they may share this experience with other socially excluded groups, disabled people face additional discrimination caused by physical barriers within the environment, inadequate transport, a lack of accessible information, and other factors.
- DASL's remit is to work with people with physical and sensory impairments, learning difficulties, mental health problems and other types of serious and long-term health problems who live in Lambeth. We are committed to providing services which are responsive, accessible and of a high quality to meet the diverse needs of these client groups.
- We work in a multi-racial community borough. We believe that equality of access to services is a fundamental right. We are committed to meeting the needs of disabled people from black and minority ethnic communities in the delivery of our existing services and in the development of new ones.
- Our main role is to advise and support people with disabilities in Lambeth to overcome discrimination and assert their human rights. Our aim in doing this is to enable people to obtain the services to which they are entitled, make choices about how and where they live and play an active role in their communities.
- In carrying out this work, we will also act as a focus for agencies which are addressing issues of poverty and social exclusion as they affect disabled people in Lambeth. We will provide information for use by professionals and others concerned with disability issues to further research, user consultation and involvement and the development of quality services.

Our core values are :

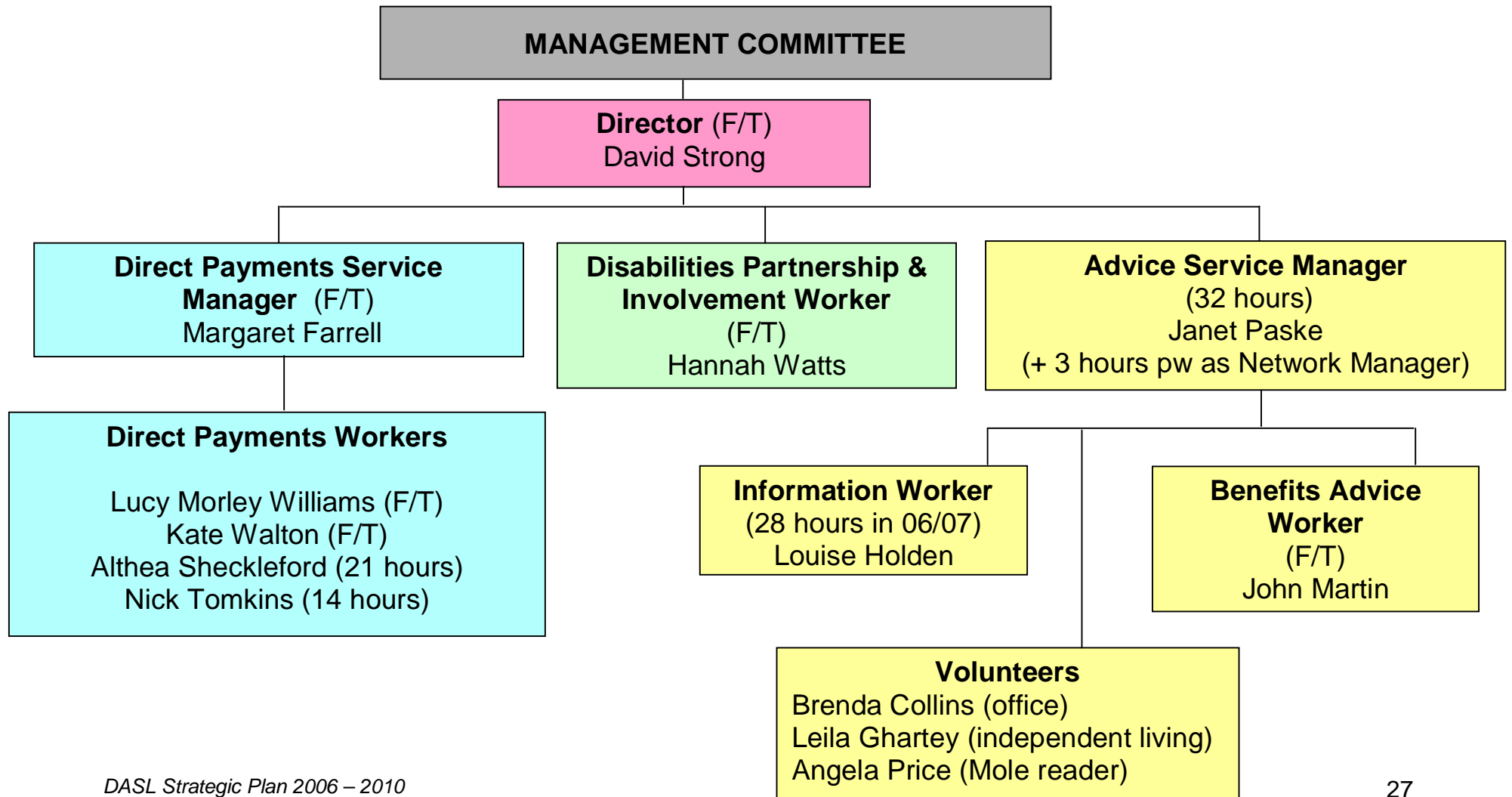
- All people who use our services deserve to be treated with respect and to have their abilities and experiences valued.
- We will work with disabled people in a way which will empower them and encourage them to develop skills and confidence to deal with their own affairs, but we will also offer appropriate ongoing support for those people who need it.
- All disabled people have the right to live their lives free from discrimination and we will challenge and take positive action to overcome this wherever it impacts on our users and members.
- Disabled people have a right to high quality services which are independent of funders and others who may seek to influence our organisation in ways which are not in the interests of our users.

- Our users and members have the right to be consulted and involved in developing our organisation and in shaping the services we provide.
- Our core services should be free to all individual users and to any organisations working in the interests of local disabled people.

In fulfilment of our mission, our objectives are :

- To provide advice and advocacy services to people in key legal areas including welfare benefits, housing and community care
- To promote direct payments as an accessible option for users of community care services and to support those who choose them to manage them effectively
- To provide information about all aspects of living with disability through a range of media and methods
- To consult with disabled users and members, supporting them to make their views known to service providers and supporting their campaigns on key issues
- To act as a focus for partnership working with agencies which are addressing issues of poverty and social exclusion as they affect disabled people in Lambeth.

Appendix 3 : **DISABILITY ADVICE SERVICE LAMBETH**
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE CHART (June 2006)



Appendix 4 : Organisation Details (at June 2006)

Disability Advice Service Lambeth is a Registered Charity and a Company Limited by Guarantee Registered in England and Wales :

Charity Number : 1087399
Company Number : 04214688

Registered Office : 336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA
Telephone : 020 7738 5656
Fax : 020 7924 9621
Email : enquiry.line@disabilitylambeth.org.uk

Management Committee

Officers : Chair : Isabelle Clement
Vice Chair : Ebenezer Akinsanmi
Treasurer : Trevor Critchley
Secretary : Gary Dando

Members : Boz Borowy, Annie McDowall, Eureka Shabazz, Ernest Hamley, Ameena Berkowitz, Judy Fink

Auditor : Hilary Adams Ltd
Chartered Accountants and Tax Consultants
91 – 95 High Street
Herne Bay
Kent CT6 5LQ

Bankers : National Westminster Bank
504 Brixton Road
London SW9 8EB

Staff : Director : David Strong
Advice Service Manager : Janet Paske
Welfare Benefits Adviser : John Martin
Information Worker : Louise Holden
Direct Payments Service Manager : Margaret Farrell
Direct Payments Workers : Lucy Morley Williams,
Althea Sheckleford, Nick Tomkins, Kate Walton
Disabilities Partnership & Involvement Worker : Hannah Watts

Volunteers : Brenda Collins (Office)
Leila Gharthey (Information)
Angela Price (Newsletter)

DASL is currently funded by Lambeth Council (Adults' & Community Services), Lambeth Primary Care Trust, Bridge House Trust, Lambeth Endowed Charities, Lloyds TSB Foundation